

THE
NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE
IN ORDER TO AVOID DESTRUCTION,

CONSIDERED AND URGED,

IN A

S E R M O N,

OCCASIONED BY THE UNHAPPY AND UNTIMELY
DEATH OF

COTTEREL SMITH,

DELIVERED AT THE THIRD SOCIETY
IN WINDHAM,

APRIL 9, 1782.

BY JAMES COGSWELL, A. M.
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN SAID SOCIETY.

Watch and pray that ye enter not into Temptation.

JESUS CHRIST.

But Him that thinketh he standeth take Heed lest he fall.

ST. PAUL.

N O R W I C H :

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P R E F A C E.

IT is not the design of this preface to make an apology for publishing the discourse which follows it; tho' a production so hasty as this was, may very probably need it, and would lie open to criticism and censure in several respects, if any should think it worthy of so much notice. But as the only motive of allowing it to go to the press, is the hope that it may be a means of doing some good, in reviving or encreasing that seriousness and sensibility, which appeared evident among a numerous audience, and especially the youth of the acquaintance of the unhappy young man, when the funeral solemnities were attended on; so it is peculiarly for them to whom plain, pungent, unadorned preaching may be useful, that the discourse was calculated and is designed, and if it may answer this design, I shall greatly rejoice. And as I could think of no subject which could be treated on of more importance or greater propriety, than that which was chosen, as repentance is highly reasonable, and absolutely necessary for all men and at all times: and as the providence of God especially points to it in this and many other dispensations, I hope and earnestly desire, that those who have insisted on printing this sermon, will endeavour and pray, that they and others may improve it for the beneficial purposes for which it was designed.

But as the death of the unhappy young man (whose death and funeral occasioned this discourse) was remarkably
singular,

singular, the special design of the preface is to give some brief account of him, and some circumstances of his uncommon and tragical end.

He was a young man of competent understanding, of a placid, benevolent and cheerful temper, beloved by his acquaintance, free from the vices of profaneness or intemperance, prudent, active, and industrious in his business, and honest in his dealings. He lived with an aged mother and brother in cordial agreement, was in easy and prosperous circumstances, had the prospect of joining in marriage to an agreeable companion, and with the approbation and good will of all her friends: he was in health, and without the least apparent tincture of melancholy or disorder in his mind;—he was prosecuting his worldly business as usual, and in the week before he put an end to his life, had purchased a yoke of oxen, and agreed in partnership to take the news-paper for the next half year; even the morning when he hanged himself, there was no previous circumstances which gave the family the least suspicion of the dismal catastrophe, until he was missing, and accidentally found by them, (for they knew not where to look) suspended by a small cord in a little building not far distant from the dwelling house. No circumstances have since that time appeared, or can be recollected by his relations or any of his acquaintance, which would create any more suspicion of any previous design to perpetrate the unnatural act of suicide, than in any other person whatever. What was, what could be the occasion of this mournful event, must remain among those

those things which we cannot at present understand. I hope none will imagine that this narration is given with a design to vindicate, or even to extenuate the horrid guilt of suicide, in any case where the person is in possession of reason, and it is done deliberately and of design. Whether this was the case with this unhappy youth, is what it is impossible certainly to determine. But it gives us great reason to exclaim, O Lord, what is man? It should excite us earnestly to pray for the preserving, restraining and saving grace of God. It should excite us speedily to repent of and reform all our sins. It should be a means to shew us how uncertain are all the prospects of worldly prosperity; to labour for content with our circumstances, and submission to the will of God in all things, and constantly and earnestly to pray to God, that he would not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil, and that he would keep us by his mighty power, thro' faith unto salvation.



THE
NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE IN
ORDER TO AVOID DESTRUCTION,

CONSIDERED AND URGED,

IN A

SERMON, &c.

LUKE, xiii. 5.

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

WE read in the first verse of this chapter, that some persons gave our Saviour an account of a terrible and uncommon calamity, which had happened to a number of Galileans whom Pilate had murdered, in a manner shocking to humanity; by our Saviour's answer, it seems these relators judged that these persons must have been guilty of some extraordinary wickedness in their former lives, or this disaster would never have happened to them. He corrects their mistake in this matter, and endeavours immediately to turn their attention

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to themselves, and urges them from these instances of misery and distress which had been permitted under the direction of divine Providence to fall on these persons, to realize the absolute necessity of repentance for every one, and for themselves in particular.---This I take to be the special design of our Saviour.---'Tis as tho' he had said to them : whether these were the greatest of sinners or not, is of no importance for you to know ; they were doubtless sinners and so are ye :---if they had not repented they are suffering a much more dreadful punishment than that which Pilate inflicted upon them, though he mingled their blood with their sacrifices ; and a much more terrible destruction than they endured, who were suddenly and miserably crushed to death, by the fall of the tower of Siloam, which buried them under it's ruins. And as you are all sinners as well as they, except you avert the stroke of divine vengeance, by a sincere and speedy repentance, you will suffer such a dreadful punishment as will ruin you forever.

Viewing the text in this light, it points us to the improvement which we are called to make of that mournful, sudden, and very uncommon death, which is the occasion of our meeting together at this time ; a death the most signal and extraordinary, considered in all its circumstances, which ever took place in this town, or almost any other. So much the louder is the call to repentance to every one of us. It is indeed louder to some than to others ; but it is loud, very loud to every sinner, and we are all sinners. The
Son

Son of God who knew what is in man, evidently designed to assert in our text the universal necessity of repentance, and to enforce it by one of the strongest motives :---as all have sinned and are by the righteous law of God under a sentence of condemnation ; the sentence must be reversed or everlasting destruction must ensue. The sentence of condemnation stands in full force against every impenitent person. As without holiness no man can see God, so as to be accepted by him and enjoy him, and without repentance there can be no true holiness, it follows both from the appointment of God and the nature of things, that it is impossible that any can be saved without repentance.

In further prosecuting the subject let us consider,

- I. THE nature of repentance.
- II. THE necessity of it, particularly in this view, that without repentance we must all perish.

In handling the first point, I shall endeavour briefly to shew,

1. WHENCE repentance arises, or by what it is produced.
2. MENTION three or four essential and distinguishing properties of it.

WITH regard to the nature of repentance, I know of no better definition, in so few words, than that contained in the Assemblies shorter Catechism, viz. " that it is a saving grace whereby a sinner out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension

“**Recognition of the mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavours after new obedience.**” A realizing apprehension of God, as he has discovered himself in his word, is the first grand source of godly sorrow for sin, and will not fail to produce that self abhorrence and abasement for sin, wherein the essence of true repentance mainly consists.

MANY observations might be made to shew the truth of this position ; but perhaps a plain instance of undoubted fact and experience may illustrate and evince it in the best manner, and we have one fully to the point in the case of Job, his words are these ; “ I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee ; wherefore I abhor my self and repent in dust and ashes.” While Job discourses with his friends, he justifies himself ; he longs for an opportunity to do it before God himself. But when God discovers himself to him, he alters his dialect ; he justifies God, and condemns himself. Elihu had good reasons to charge Job with saying, as in chap. xxxiii. verse 9. “ I am clean without transgression, I am innocent ; neither is their iniquity in me.” But how exceedingly different is his confession, when God discovers himself ? The sinner abhors himself as a sinner, he does not hate himself as a man.--- He does not wish evil to himself ; this is impossible.--- But he abhors his sinful conduct ; he hates those evil principles and vile inclinations which he sees in himself. In this view he is exceedingly displeased with himself, and longs to be altered and made better. He acknowledges the right-
fulness

ness of God, he acquits him of all blame. Whatever God causes him to suffer ; he owns, he feels the justice of God and adores his holiness, tho' he should condemn him to everlasting misery. In a word, a discovery of God's glory causes the sinner to realize his own meanness and vileness : an apprehension of the wisdom of God discovers to him his own folly ; and a view of the immaculate and infinite holiness of the Devine Nature, shews him his own impurity and deformity. And even the goodness of God teaches him his own dissingenuity and ingratitude. These glorious perfections of God are as a glass, wherein the sinner views his contrariety to them all ; nor is this only the case, when the sinner is first brought home to God. Then indeed a new and surprising scene opens to him, which fills him with horror and amazement ; quite turns his thoughts of himself upside down, and makes him hate that sinful self which was his darling before. But this is true of real Christians : there is a real self displacency produced in them by the new and fresh discoveries which God makes of himself to them : thus it was with Job. The reason of this is obvious, viz. because there is so much sin still remaining in them, and cleaving to them ; this often produces that mournful exclamation. O wretched man that I am, &c." so far forth as they see and feel a conformity to God in themselves, they approve of it. They love holiness which is the image of God wherever they behold it, and nevertheless because it is in themselves ; but there is so much sin mingled with all their righteousness, that in a comparative sense, they count it all as filthy rags. Now so long as this imperfection remains, the more clear and just views they have of God, the more
of

of this self displacence and abasement on account thereof, there will be in them. But the nature of true evangelical repentance will further appear, by briefly considering these following distinguishing properties of it.

THE true penitent mourns for and hates sin, on account of its intrinsic odiousness.

He depends only on the merits of a Saviour for acceptance with God, and returns to him through Christ.

THIS repentance is universal.

It is also habitual and permanent. And,

I. It is a distinguishing and essential property of true repentance, that the penitent mourns for and hates sin, because of its intrinsic odiousness. There is a sorrow for sin which takes its rise, only from the evil consequences which flow from it. Sometimes persons will bewail their folly, that they have brought infamy, sickness, or poverty on themselves, by their evil courses. At other times, terrors of conscience for fear of future punishment, will excite pungent grief for and beget strong resolutions against sin: and a partial and temporary reformation takes place, in consequence of such repentance. But true evangelical repentance is principally and primarily for the intrinsic evil of sin itself. The soul is made sensible, not only that sin exposes to, but that it deserves everlasting punishment. The person is made sensible that sin is in it self the most odious, abominable and accursed thing: and mourns for the innate turpitude and malignity which there is in it, and would mourn for this though there

there were no positive punishment annexed to it. Here then let us pause and ask ourselves, from whence arises our sorrow for sin? Did we ever feel our hearts broken within us for our sins, as being against a holy just and good God; as being against a bleeding dying Saviour? so that the language of our hearts after the commission of sin, or for the sin that dwelleth within us, has been that of David, "against thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." Or have we been kept from the commission of sin, by that which restrained Joseph, "how shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" If repentance flows merely from suffering, or the fear of suffering, it is only selfish and mercenary, but if from love to God and holiness, it is sincere and saving.

But,

II. THE true penitent depends only on the merits of a Saviour for acceptance with God, and return to God through Christ.

THIS is a very observable property of true repentance, and distinguishes it from what Divines have generally called a legal repentance.

IN this the sinner depends on his repentance for acceptance with God; is much pleased with his penitent frames and earnest cries, his reformatory tears, abstinence and the like, and thinks it will be hard indeed if God takes no notice of them. Thus the self righteous Jews, Isaiah lviii, 3. "wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?" But this is far from being the temper of the

the real penitent. However pungent his sorrow may be, whatever brokenness of heart he feels, though his head were water and his eyes a constant flowing stream, he has no dependance on these things to justify him before God. His language is the same as that of the Psalmist; "O Lord enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh be justified." He has no dependance on his duties, frames, prayers or resolutions, to recommend him to God; he disclaims his own righteousness, and flies to the blood of atonement; the righteousness, the Lamb of God, is his only dependance for acceptance with God. But I must not enlarge.

III. ANOTHER essential and distinguishing property of real, evangelical repentance is, that it is universal. A more selfish legal repentance may have considerable and observable effects in producing reformation; it may influence persons to forsake many sins and perform many duties; but after all it is partial. -- Some beloved idol is spared; "the Lord pardon thy servant concerning this one thing," says Naaman. They think they make a great sacrifice, and that their conduct is worthy of much commendation, when they have parted with so many beloved objects and beloved delights, and God will not be so strict as to oblige them to part with all: and possibly they may really think they have parted with every sin, but are deceived. Some secret and disguised sin, lies hid in the heart and spoils all, like the dead fly in the apothecary's perfume: but true genuine repentance, is universal. The penitent mourns for and hates sin, as being what it is, and therefore hates all sin. They who

who esteem God's precepts to be right in all things, hate every false way; they pray with David, Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24. "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." The person who can thus sincerely appeal and pray to God, discovers a real and prevailing aversion to every sin. But he, who knowingly and habitually indulges himself in any course of sin, however small he may judge it to be, his repentance is not of the right kind. If a single lust is unmortified, and has the governing power in the heart, it will prove that no sin is truly mortified, and will as certainly condemn the person in whom it is found, as though he were a liar or a murderer. He who is born of God doth not commit sin in this manner, neither can he, because the seed of divine grace abideth in him. But he that thus committeth sin, is the servant of sin. But,

IV. THE last property of repentance which I shall mention is, that is permanent. That repentance which is produced by accidental causes, is transient, and often abides but for a short space. Under some alarming or humbling dispensation of divine providence, or in attending on some awakening discourse, or from a sudden fright, persons will sometimes be very sorry for their sins, and terrified for fear some terrible consequences will follow.---You will observe them to be very religious all of a sudden, full of good purposes, promises and resolutions; but their sorrow is very short lived; it vanishes like a dream as soon as the humiliating

ailing providences are removed, and their fright ceases. They go away and forget what manner of persons they are : but a gospel repentance is totally different from this : it proceeds from a thorough change of the heart ; of the whole temper and bias of the soul. Consequently it is a repentance to salvation, which the real penitent never repents of. How shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer therein, says St. Paul ? And again, sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace. But I proceed very briefly,

2. To consider the necessity of repentance, particularly for this reason, because without repentance we must all perish. That repentance is necessary in order to the forgiveness of sins, to avoid future punishment, and enjoy salvation ; is evident from many places of sacred scripture, and indeed from not only a few detached passages, but from the whole current of scripture, both in the old and new Testament : In the 7th Psalm, 11, 12, 13 v. David says, " God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword : he hath bent his bow and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death : " and St. Peter addressing the people in the 3d of Acts, 19th v. says, " repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord ; " which evidently means the last judgment. Yet farther St. Paul asserts in 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16 : " For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish.

perish. To the one we are the favour of death unto death, and to the other a favour of life unto life." This last text fully ascertains the meaning of the word perish, as used by our blessed Saviour: it means the same with the 2d death, the same with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power. And the words of our blessed Saviour are most peremptory, unequivocal, and universal; except ye repent, ye shall all perish, whoever you are, and whatever are your circumstances; be you old or young, rich or poor, honourable or despised; professors of religion, or openly prophane sinners. Let every impenitent sinner consider and lay this to heart, you are in the most wretched condition, the most perilous situation, however prosperous your present circumstances may be, however remote from danger you may appear: there is but a step between you and death. You are in perishing circumstances, and will be condemned and executed, and turned into hell with the wicked, and all that forget God, in a very little while, unless you repent. The eternal word, the Alpha and the Omega, the faithful and true witness hath pronounced it, and he will fulfil his word; if we believe not, he abideth faithful. He cannot deny himself.

IMPROVEMENT.

For an improvement of this discourse, I shall hint at some motives to repentance, which the word of God exhibits to all.

II. SHew that the mournful providence which has called us together at this time, is a speaking monitor, especially to the mourners; to young people, and that is so to us all.

III. SHALL urge the great expedience and importance of speedy repentance, to such as have not yet repented.

I. Then I am briefly to urge some motives to repentance, which ought at all times to prevail upon all men to repent. And,

1. ONE reason for repentance is, that it is a most reasonable duty. Indeed it is impossible that God should require any thing but what is just: his ways are all equal. But to repent and turn to God, is the most reasonable thing which can be conceived. It is infinitely unreasonable to sin against a Being absolutely perfect, infinitely holy, just and good. Such a Being is God. It follows that it is infinitely reasonable, and perfectly right, that the sinner immediately repent of all his transgressions, and return to God with his whole heart. Should a traitor to his country refuse to throw down his arms, and return to his allegiance and duty, especially when graciously invited to do so, would he not be deemed an unreasonable and ungrateful monster? Much greater is the unreasonable folly and madness of the person who refuses to repent and turn to God. But,

2. ANOTHER very alluring motive to repentance, is the great mercy of God, and his readiness to forgive all who truly repent. The great God himself has urged this as a genuine reason, which ought universally to prevail,---He

has told us, the goodness of God leadeth to repentance. Consider then the bowels of compassion, which the great God has manifested. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but that the wicked turn and live. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. What words are these, and did they come from heaven? Yes, my hearers, these are the words of the living God. He it is who has sent his Son to proclaim the necessity of repentance, and to bleed and die on the cross, that he might purchase forgiveness.---Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. In his name therefore, repentance and forgiveness is preached to all where the gospel comes. And O amazing, incomprehensible, condescension and goodness! every minister of the gospel is warranted, is commanded to say to sinful men, as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God. But,

3. THE absolute necessity of repentance which has been fully evinced in this discourse, added to the motives already mentioned, should not fail to persuade every one to repent, and turn to God by Christ. Men imagine many things very necessary, which are the meanest trifles when compared to repentance. Food and rament are needful; peace is necessary; life is necessary; but what are they all when compared with that, without which, we must be inconceivably miserable forever? It was a noble saying of the Roman

Roman General, when dissuaded from setting sail in a dangerous storm, to carry succours and provisions to a besieged garrison. *Necessarium est navigare non est necessarium vivere*; i. e. Our voyage is more necessary than our lives. This may truly and eminently be said of repentance; in the emphatical language of the king of truth, "*it is the one thing needful.*" This brings me to shew,

2. THAT the mournful providence which calls us together at this time, is a speaking monitor to enforce these motives to the mourners; to young people, his friends and acquaintance, and to us all.

AND can there be any thing further added? Does there need any thing more to enforce these motives which have already been urged? Yes, God can and he does, by his providence, add greatly to the weight of them.---That mournful tragical event which has now called us together, speaks in accents like thunder to us all. It shews the frailty, the depravity of human nature. It proclaims the great, the inconceivable evil of sin, the fatal source of all disorder and calamity. It writes in capitals the great uncertainty of our lives, and the infinite importance of being speedily ready for death, which we can never be without repentance.---It teaches us the great need we continually stand in of watchfulness and prayerfulness to God, that he would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted. It teaches us that he that thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he fall.

THE near relations and particular mourners, are especially reminded of these important truths by this event, so peculiarly affecting and humiliating to them.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

YOUR case is so singularly pitiable and distressed, that I know not how to address you.---My heart bleeds for you.---I am ready to say, what thing shall I take to witness for you? What shall I equal to you that I may comfort you? And no doubt you are ready to say, behold all ye that pass by; look on our affliction, and see if there be any sorrow like to our sorrow.

BUT you will do well to consider, that the way to solid comfort for us sinful creatures, is repentance. We can never arrive at true comfort without it. You are all called to it by this providence, called on the loudest of all, as the stroke is heaviest on you. Be entreated then to search and try your ways, and turn to the Lord. If in any of you true repentance is begun, pray God that it may be increased by your present sorrows; if you have neglected it to this time, for God's sake and your own, neglect it no longer. Remember the most pungent grief and melting affection, if it is merely natural and not attended with, or leading to that sorrow for sin which is true repentance, will avail you nothing.---Remember also, that the sorrow of this world worketh death, but godly sorrow worketh repentance which is to salvation, never to be repented of.

MAY the aged and widowed parent so mourn, that she may be comforted: May you (Madam) be enabled and directed

pected to betake yourself to that God who has stiled himself the husband of the widow. May you lay hold on that covenant which is ordered in all things, and sure.---Then tho' your house is not as you could wish; tho' it decrease instead of increasing, yet it will be all your salvation and all your desire, that God has established his everlasting covenant with you.---And may all the brethren, sisters and relatives, humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

THE young people who have been the friends and acquaintance of the unhappy young man who is gone, are, by this alarming event, loudly warned not to delay religion, but speedily to repent and return to God, remembering their Creator now in the days of their youth.

Mr dear youth, you appear to be seriously affected, and it is not strange that you are; you would be stupid blocks if you were not. This surprising event, is as if God spake to you from heaven, saying, repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. It was especially for your sakes (my dear young hearers) that I was willing to preach on this affecting and solemn occasion. With grief and concern have I observed the unseasonable gaiety of some, and the unreasonable and unaccountable stupidity which have so much prevailed, especially among those to whom God has been most loudly speaking in his providence, for months and years past. Enquire, (my young hearers) seriously consider; have not prophaneness, cursing and oaths, greatly prevailed among some, intemperance and debauchery

ery among others ? And have not young people in general given way to unbecoming levity, so that seriousness, and all thoughts about repentance, about any branch or exercise of religion, have been criminally banished from your heart, your words, and the company's you have kept ? When God has been calling you in his providence, to mourning and lamentation, have you not instead of this, given a loose to merriment and revelling, chambering and frolicking ? Has not this been too much the practice of not only unmarried young people, but of some heads of families ? Have not these practices evidenced the absence of seriousness, and that you have been going on in sin, instead of repenting of it ? Have they not evidenced a mournful and prevailing stupidity under awakening providences ? A criminal insensibility, when God's hand has been lifted up in terrible and distressing judgments ? Your country has been in imminent danger ; your countrymen slaughtered and imprisoned in great numbers. How many of your dear friends and neighbours have fallen in battle, or perished by inhuman cruelty in captivity ? Have not many others returned enfeebled, half dead ; who have only just escaped the yawning grave ? And have not you too much slighted all these warnings, as to many of you at least ? Where is that sobriety and apparent concern, which a just sense of these things and the proper improvement of them, would not fail to produce ? And now when you had just heard of one of your number and acquaintance murdered and mangled in a manner shocking to humanity, by a merciless enemy ; last of all, this surprising, unnatural, tragical scene, was permitted to take place among you : Your acquaintance, your friend and companion is gone : is gone to appear before his judge ; has put a period to his own life, for what motive no person in the world can so much as guess. It would not have been less strange, less surprising, had it been any one of you all who had been left to perpetrate the shocking, unnatural deed, than the young man who is gone to the mansions of the dead, never, never more to return. And why was this strange uncommon event permitted just at this place, and at this time ? May we not suppose ; yea, have we not just reason to conclude, that it was because God saw you, stood in peculiar need of some more than common

peal

peal to alarm you? And O, may we not hope that it will really and to good purpose, alarm some of you! And if it does not, what reason have we to fear that nothing ever will? If you will not hear this call, neither would you be persuaded, though one arose from the dead. O then be entreated to hear Christ saying to you in this providence, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Be ye therefore ready, for at such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.

When you look on this pale corse, this ghastly monument of the power of sin and death, ask yourselves what security have you, or can you have while you continue impenitent, that you shall not come to the same tragical end which he did? What but God's preventing goodness, his restraining grace will hinder you, and you have no security of these in a state of impenitence.

At least this alarming event tells you, that you are liable every moment to death, and announces in the ears of mortals this certain but unheeded truth: every man at his best estate, is altogether vanity.... And in whatever state you are called out of the world if you have not repented, you must perish.

3. THEREFORE how stupid, how criminal is the folly of delaying repentance, and preparing for death and eternity, on any pretence whatever. Hear the words of the learned and pious Doctor Doddridge: "I know, says he, that you who are young, are under peculiar temptation to defer that care of your souls, which you know to be necessary, a little longer. Though it is strange that the death of so many of your companions should not be an answer to some of the most specious and dangerous of those temptations. Methinks if there were the least degree of uncertainty, the importance is too weighty to put matters to the venture. But here the uncertainty is great and apparent. You must certainly know that there are certain critical seasons of life for managing the concerns of it, which are of such a nature, that if once lost they may never return. Here is a critical season. Now is the accepted time, now is the day

day of salvation : this language may not be spoken to-morrow. Talk not of a more convenient season, none can be more convenient ; and that to which you would probably refer, it is least of all so. A dying time. You would not choose then to have any important business in hand ; and will you of choice refer the greatest business of all, to that languishing, hurrying, amazing hour ? If a friend were then to come to you with the ballance of an intricate account, or a view of a title to an estate, you would shake your fainting head, and lift up your pale trembling hand, and say, perhaps with a feeble voice, alas ! is this a time for these things ? And is it a time for so much greater things than these ?" Thus he..... But my hearers, from this as well as a thousand other instances of mortality, you see that you are far, very far from being sure of even a dying bed to repent, and make your peace with God on. If you neglect the present time, you will probably never again have a time so fit, or a call so loud as you now have. And ah ! what must your doom be, if when God has given you not only a space to repent, but so many warnings, invitations and commands, still you will not repent ? O hear and tremble at those dreadful words, he that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. God grant that you may now repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. A M E N.

ERRATA, in page 4, line 5. *preface* ; for *placed*, read *placid*. Page 5, line 11 ; after the word *reform*, add *from*. Page 14, line 12 ; for *truely*, read *truly*.



